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a movable carrier for moving said carriers in to a radiation region of said laser units, said carriers being fixed to said movable carrier.

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the first complete examination of the instant application. Claim 3 is the single claim remaining in the instant application. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

CLAIM OBJECTION

The claims stand objected to for being improperly numbered. As can be seen in this Amendment, independent claim 2 has been re-numbered to independent claim 3. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claim objection has been obviated.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over La Rocca et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,751,365 in view of Miller et al., U. S. Patent No. 4,642,439. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent claim 3 sets forth a combination of limitations including “[A]n apparatus for laser processing plate-like interconnect carriers laminated on both sides, said apparatus comprising:...a movable carrier for moving said carriers into a radiation region of said laser light, said carriers being fixed to said movable carrier.” Applicants respectfully submit that the patent documents relied upon by the Examiner, either in combination together or standing alone, fail to teach or suggest at least the indicated limitations of independent claim 3.

La Rocca et al. teach multiple power laser sources S that are capable of welding two pieces 10 and 12. The laser sources S emit a laser beam L simultaneously. In order to weld the pieces 10 and 12 together, the laser sources S move simultaneously in the direction illustrated by arrow V. (See Fig. 4 of the relied upon patent document.)

La Rocca et al. fail to teach or suggest the movement of pieces 10 and 12 in order to conduct the welding by the laser sources S. Moreover, La Rocca et al. fail to teach or suggest impinging the laser beams L on a plate-like interconnect carrier that is laminated on both sides. Actually, it does not appear that the invention according to La Rocca et al. could be modified in order to allow the movement of pieces 10 and 12 during the welding process, as such a modification would create the possibility that pieces 10 and 12 may move or adjust undesirably as they are welded.

Miller et al. teach an apparatus for edge contouring a contact lens. As is illustrated in Figure 7 of the relied upon patent document, the apparatus includes two laser optical systems 780 and 790. These laser optical systems include reflective surfaces 608 and 618, respectively, for creating laser beam reflection.

The Examiner has relied upon Miller et al. to make up for deficiencies of the La Rocca et al. patent document. The Examiner states that "La Rocca et al. does not teach beam deflection or plate-like interconnect carriers laminated on both sides." Review of the Miller et al. patent document reveals that the disclosure therein also fails to teach or suggest use of lasers on plate-like interconnect carriers laminated on both sides. As a matter of fact, it appears that the only materials that Miller et al. can operate on are those which make up contact lenses. Certainly, contact lenses are not made of plate-like interconnect carriers laminated on both sides.

For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that La Rocca et al. and Miller et al., either in combination together or standing alone, fail to teach or suggest at least the indicated recitation of independent claim 3. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are respectfully requested.

MOTIVATION TO COMBINE

Applicants respectfully remind the Examiner that a Motivation to Combine references must be more substantial than generalized statements by the Examiner. Examiner states that “it would have been obvious to modify La Rocca et al. with Miller et al. because it gives more versatility to the welding system.” (See current Office Action page 4, first partial paragraph.) The Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s provided motivation merely includes a general statement perhaps, contrived using hindsight knowledge of the present invention.

A recent case from the Federal Circuit prohibits using generalized statements as motivation for combining patent documents. That is, the Federal Circuit explained that “deficiencies of the cited references can not be remedied by the Board’s general conclusions about what is basic knowledge or common sense.” In re Lee, 277 F.3d 1338, 61 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 2002). With this in mind, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reevaluate her stated motivation for combining the relied upon patent documents.

For the additional reasons stated immediately hereinabove, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Timothy R. Wyckoff (Reg. No. 46,175) at (703) 390-3030 in the Washington D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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VERSION OF MARKED-UP CHANGES

IN THE CLAIMS

The following claim has been amended as follows:

[2]3. An apparatus for laser processing of plate-like interconnect carriers laminated on both sides [workpieces with processing surfaces lying diametrically opposite one another], said apparatus comprising:

two laser units directed towards one another, said laser units being capable of simultaneous operation, said carriers [workpieces] placed between the two laser units;

an internal beam deflection device for each of said two laser units, said internal deflection device to deflect respective laser beams emitted from said laser units on to regions of said carriers [workpieces] to be processed; and

a movable carrier for moving said carriers [workpieces] in to a radiation region of said laser units, said carriers [workpieces] being fixed to said movable carrier.

Claim 4 has been canceled.